

Minutes from the fifth meeting of WeCAN held at Westfield City Hall Assembly Room on
July 22, 2008 at 7 pm.

Disclaimer: I hope you will find these notes helpful. They are not a complete representation of the whole meeting, but rather the highlights of topics discussed. Feel free to contact me at Westfield City Services Building (317) 896-5452 if you have any questions. -TB

July 22, 2008

Agenda:

- I. Announcements
- II. Trash/Recycling Committee Update
- III. Downtown Westfield Presentation by Jim Anderson
- IV. Economic Development by Joe Plankis, Director
- V. Inquiry - US 31 Development

I. Announcements

Crime Watch

Police Chief Kevin Jowitt addressed Crime Watch in Westfield. He informed the WeCAN group that the season for car break-ins is here but there are precautions that residents can take:

- 1) Put cars in garage and close garage when home.
- 2) If that is not possible, lock cars and remove anything of value (wallets, purses, GPS units, stereos), especially within sight. Also, remove the garage door opener and take it inside so no one will be able to break-into your car and open your garage to gain access to your home.
- 3) If you see or hear anything suspicious, CALL 911 or the Westfield Police Department 896-5236. Most of the crimes happen late at night, people on foot, possibly with backpacks.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

CERT is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT is a realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens will be initially on their own and their actions can make a difference.

There will be a CERT Training Program held every Tuesday and Thursday from September 2 – September 18, 2008 from 6:30 pm - 10:30 pm at the Westfield Public Safety Building. You must attend **ALL** classes. All interested residents are encouraged to fill out an application (available on the WeCAN page as well the Westfield Fire Department, 17535 Dartown Road).

Neighborhood Speed Partnership Update

Merrimac is the first participant of the Neighborhood Speed Partnership. The letters to the residents have already been sent out and the response has been positive so far. Updates will be given as the program goes into its next stages.

II. Trash/Recycling Committee Update

Jim Ake, Chairman of the WeCAN Trash/Recycling Committee presented the upcoming benchmarks that will make the idea of a uniform trash and recycling contract into reality:

Timeline

- August 11 Council Meeting - Introduction of Ordinance / WeCAN Presentation
- August 25 Council Meeting - Adoption of Ordinance
- August 26 WeCAN Meeting
- August 27 Solicit Bids
- September 3 - Pre-Bid Meeting
- September 22 Board of Works Meeting- Bids Opened
- September 23 – WeCAN Meeting
- Oct/Nov – Decision
- January 1, 2009 – Service Begins

Public Relations Communication

- Official press announcement - Press Release sent for distribution
- Direct mail piece to all residents via water/sewer bills outlining benefits
- Creation of informational flyers to be distributed at all public buildings
- Website Postings i.e. Fact sheet, FAQ's
- Mayor visits HOAs
- Public Service Announcement/Interview "Westfield Matters" cable show
- Letter of endorsement to all residents from HOA Board
- Advertisement in Subdivision Newsletters
- Advertisement in community paper

III. Downtown Westfield

Jim Anderson, President of the Downtown Westfield Neighborhood Association (DWNA), presented an informative slideshow about Downtown Westfield. The slideshow highlighted the history of efforts to sustain downtown. Most recently, the Downtown Westfield Neighborhood Association, has established a non-profit 501(c)(3) status. This move has dramatically increased the amount of private sector investment into the downtown area. Many people and organizations are involved in the planning process.

The Grand Junction is the area downtown where the waterways and trails meet. The nearby major highways make the Grand Junction ideal for activities and economic development.

Beautifying downtown is one of the priorities as well as holding various events throughout the year. Some examples are the Westfield Farmer's Market is every Friday, 4pm-7pm, June 6 through October 3 rain or shine; Numa, a cultural celebration, September 13-14, 2008; Cool Yule Celebration, December 6-7, 2008; and Union Street Downtown Derby, June 2009.

The strategies of the Master Plan are included in the in the pdf of the slideshow on the WeCAN page. Here is the anticipated timeline for the plan:

- 2008 – Master Plan Preparation
- 2009 – Engineering of Phase 1 Projects
- 2010 – Implementation of Public Catalyst Projects
- 2011 – Implementation of Public Catalyst Projects

Attraction of Private Sector Investment

IV. Economic Development

Joe Plankis, Director of the Economic Development Department, provided valuable information on the current city status and what the city is going. Currently, the assessed value of Westfield is about \$2.1B. Approximately 73% of the city is residential and 27% is non-residential. 12% is Retail. 1/5 of the Retail will be affected by the US 31 project.

The #1 priority of the Economic Development Department is to work with existing businesses in Westfield. Site visits ensure proper communications. The department also works with the state to obtain training funds for expanding businesses. Every effort is being made to relocate those businesses that are affected by the US 31 projects somewhere else within Westfield.

The #2 priority is to bring New Businesses to Westfield. The department also works with several non-profit organizations such as the Indy Partnership, Indy Economic Development Foundation, and Hamilton County Alliance. Requests for potential sites are sent to these organizations and then filtered to the communities. Last year, for the entire year, the department only received 50 requests. Since January 1, 2008, the department has received 75. Those requests have strict deadlines; 55 out of the 75 requests required a response within 48 hours. In addition to getting leads from the other organizations, the Economic Development Department has also worked to get some on its own by presenting Westfield at a Developer's Breakfast. Westfield has made it to the short list twice, one entity is still pending and the other went to a different state.

Mr. Plankis also went through the packet of information that is given to prospects. Included in the packets are maps, brochures, Economic Development Quarterly Letter, and letters from the Mayor and Joe Plankis.

A question that was raised at the last WeCAN meeting was how Westfield is going to benefit from the Superbowl in Indy. The Hamilton County Convention and Visitor's Bureau will assist as well as the Indianapolis Executive Airport. There are brochures of Westfield at both places and they will both be heavily populated as people flying into the Executive Airport will go through Westfield. Lantern Commons and Eagletown will have restaurants and retail shopping for residents and visitors.

Joe Plankis also mentioned that Forbes ranked Hamilton County as America's #1 Best Place to Raise a Family. Quoted from the article: "Raising a happy family requires more than just a good school system. With that in mind, we ranked the remaining counties using 10 data points: cost of living, graduation rate, standardized scores, home price, property tax rate as a percentage of median home price, percentage of homes occupied by owner, per-capita income, air quality, crime rate and commute time." Visit forbes.com to read more.

IV. Inquiry – US 31 Development

Some topics for exploration next meeting: interaction between interchanges and proposed streets; how the traffic will flow; timetable of planning and construction; where the ramps and exits will be; when bridges will be replaced.

Other topics for discussion at future meetings include the Thoroughfare Plan and a presentation by Fire Chief Burtron on the future growth and delivery of service.

The Zip Code issue was also discussed. The local post office agreed to take action but was overridden by Chicago who did not want to discuss it for the next 2 years. Mayor Cook is now looking to US Representative Dan Burton to get uniform Zip Codes in Westfield.

Minutes from the fifth meeting of WeCAN held at Westfield City Hall Assembly Room on
July 22, 2008 at 7 pm.

If you have questions/suggestions, please email Tammy at tblackburn@westfield.in.gov.